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Papal Trial in Rome May Call Racketeer

By JOHN TAGLIABUE
Special to The New York Times

ROME, June 17 — A court here today put off a decision on whether to question a confessed racketeer about his assertion that members of the Italian secret service, working with organized crime leaders, prodded the Turkish gunman who shot Pope John Paul II into implicating Bulgaria and the Soviet Union in the shooting.

Meanwhile, the racketeer, Giovanni Pandico, said during a trial against a criminal gang in Naples, where he is testifying for the Government, that the aim of the underworld effort was to gain Mehmet Ali Agca, the Pope's convicted assailant, "as a future killer."

Talking with reporters from the cage in which he is confined in the Naples courtroom, Mr. Pandico said the Turk was "induced by our supplications, in quotation marks, to talk."

The implication appeared to be that the purported involvement of Bulgaria and the Soviet Union in the Pope's shooting was an invention.

In a magazine interview that appeared today, Mr. Pandico said Gen. Pietro Musumeci, former deputy chief of military intelligence, met Raffaele Cutolo, the head of organized crime in Naples, on March 1, 1981, in Ascoli Piceno prison, and made a deal to induce Mr. Agca to implicate the Soviet bloc in the papal shooting.

It is the first time that a witness has supplied details of possible ties between Mr. Agca and the intelligence service and between his testimony against Bulgaria and a spurious Masonic lodge uncovered in 1981. Its members, including General Musumeci, have been accused of subverting the intelligence service, Servizio Informazione e Sicurezza Militare, to prevent the Communists from coming to power.

Judge Ilario Martella, the investigating magistrate in the purported papal plot, said in his writ of indictment that two agents visited Mr. Agca in jail in December 1981, but that evidence offered by their agencies "removes any suspicion" of undue influence.

Mr. Pandico, in his interview, says intelligence officials obtained the cooperation of Mr. Cutolo in coaching Mr. Agca, after the gang leader had asked officials to delay his transferral to another jail, because of reports that he would be assassinated. Mr. Cutolo and Mr. Pandico were imprisoned in Ascoli Piceno at the same time as Mr. Agca.

General Musumeci and other former secret service officers are on trial here on charges of setting up a group within the intelligence service charged with carrying out illegal activities. The accused deny any wrongdoing.

For a year after he shot the Pope, Mr. Agca denied he had accomplices. In May 1981, or two months after the purported meeting between intelligence officials and organized crime figures, he told investigators that he had been assisted by Turkish rightists and Bulgarian diplomats.

As the trial of the Turks and Bulgarians went into its fourth week, the chief judge, Severino Santiapichi, said he would decide whether to hear Mr. Pandico after he had heard all of the defendants. But the judge ordered the text of Mr. Pandico's interview to be entered in the trial record.

Mr. Pandico had already been scheduled, as one of 123 witnesses in the papal trial, to testify about conditions in the Ascoli Piceno jail. The decision now is whether to summon him separately in connection with the statements about links between Mr. Agca and the intelligence people.

Later, Mr. Agca relived the shooting of the Pope when the court was shown four video tape recordings, made by tourists. As the tapes were shown on television sets, two shots were heard on the soundtrack. Mr. Agca contends that a third shot was fired by Oral Celik, a Turkish accomplice he says was with him in St. Peter's Square. When questioned on this point today, Mr. Agca said he could not explain the absence of a third shot on the soundtrack.

Earlier this month, Mr. Pandico's mother and several relatives were injured when a bomb blew up the shack in which they were living. When asked whether his mother's death had influenced his disclosures in connection with the papal trial, he said, "They have already killed me, regardless of whatever they do to me now."

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